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PRESS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announces that a federal grand jury in Alexandria has returned a one-count indictment charging Wilfredo Montoya Baires, also known as "Nino", age 25, of Reston, Virginia, and an MS-13 gang member, with murder in aid of racketeering. Arraignment is scheduled for November 8, 2005, before Judge T.S. Ellis, III. If convicted, Baires could receive the death penalty.

The indictment stems from a shooting at a residence in Manassas, Virginia, on August 11, 2004. Baires confronted 22-year-old Jose Escobar inside that residence and shot and killed him. Escobar was also an MS-13 gang member. MS-13 had previously "green lighted," or issued an order to kill Escobar.

The indictment charges Baires as a member of the violent street gang known as MS-13. The indictment specifically charges Baires with committing the murder to maintain or increase his position within the gang. MS-13's membership spans throughout the United States and Central America.

This indictment reflects a commitment by law enforcement to arrest and prosecute individuals who engage in gang violence and those who use firearms to commit criminal acts. Through the concerted effort of federal and local law enforcement agencies, Baires has been identified and charged with using a firearm to commit murder.

This case is being investigated by the Prince William County Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

It should be remembered that a defendant is innocent until proven guilty of the charge.

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